



Lambing, Kidding and Calving on Pasture

Introductions



Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) is a national nonprofit organization that works to ensure that all food-producing animals are raised in a humane and healthy manner.



Larissa McKenna & Samantha Gasson

FACT's Humane Farming Program Team

Email Larissa: lmckenna@foodanimalconcerns.org

Email Sam: sgasson@foodanimalconcerns.org

Website: foodanimalconcernstrust.org/farmer

FACT's services to support livestock and poultry farmers include:

- **Fund-a-Farmer Grants** (*Apply by January 20, 2022*)
- **Conference scholarships** (ongoing)
- **Customized handouts** (ongoing)
- **Free webinars** (ongoing)



Lambing, Kidding, and Calving on Pasture

LINDA COFFEY, MARGO HALE, TRACY MUMMA, LINDA POOLE-- NCAT LIVESTOCK SPECIALISTS



About NCAT

- ▶ National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) is a national nonprofit organization that helps people build resilient communities through local and sustainable solutions that reduce poverty, strengthen self-reliance, and protect natural resources.

- ▶ ATTRA information service for farmers

- Free technical assistance; 800-346-9140, askanag@ncat.org
- Farmer friendly publications, videos, tutorials, podcasts, webinars
- ATTRA.NCAT.ORG



We are here to help!

▶ Armed to Farm

- ARMEDTOFARM.ORG



▶ Soil for Water

- SOILFORWATER.ORG



▶ AgriSolar Clearinghouse

- AGRISOLARCLEARINGHOUSE.ORG



The Plan

- ▶ Introduction to the team
- ▶ 5 keys to success
- ▶ How do we handle these 5 keys?
- ▶ Q and A time at the end
- ▶ Resources coming tomorrow



Margo Hale, Arkansas

- ▶ Goats: primarily Kiko meat goats for 15 years, used to have Boers
- ▶ Cattle: Belted Galloways for 7 years, various other cattle for 20+ years
- ▶ Sheep: previously raised Katahdin hair sheep



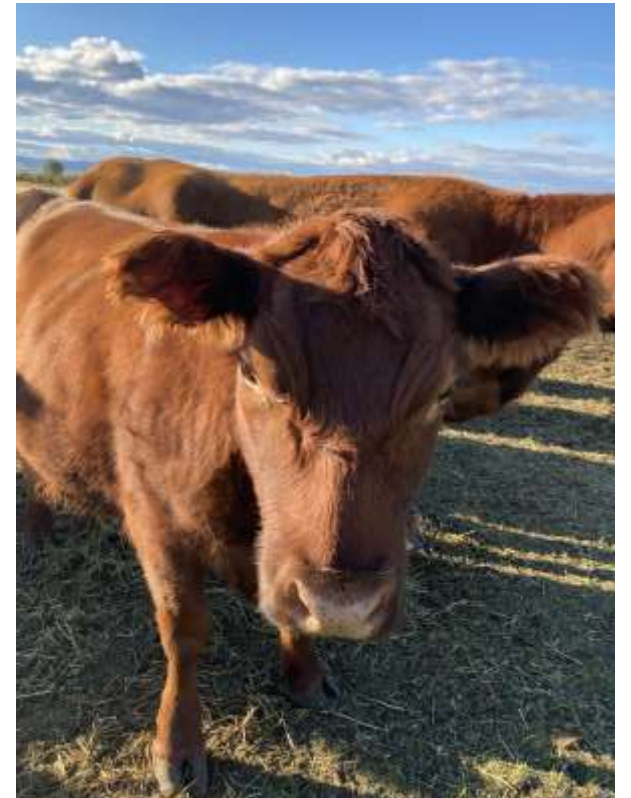
Linda Poole, Montana

- ▶ Sheep: Fine-wool crossbreds for 15 years
- ▶ Cattle: Angus composites for 30+ years



Tracy Mumma, Montana

- ▶ Sheep: Katahdin hair sheep for 15 years
- ▶ Cattle: Jersey-cross and Aberdeen Angus (small cattle) for 10+ years



Linda Coffey, Arkansas

- ▶ Sheep; formerly Suffolk, mainly Gulf Coast for the last 20 years
- ▶ Goats; a few meat goats, Alpine and Saanen dairy goats for 20 years



5 Keys to Success

- ▶ Nutrition
- ▶ Animal Selection
- ▶ Safe Environment
- ▶ Preparation
- ▶ Observation and Intervention as needed



- ▶ Birth



Nutrition

▶ KEY to success!!

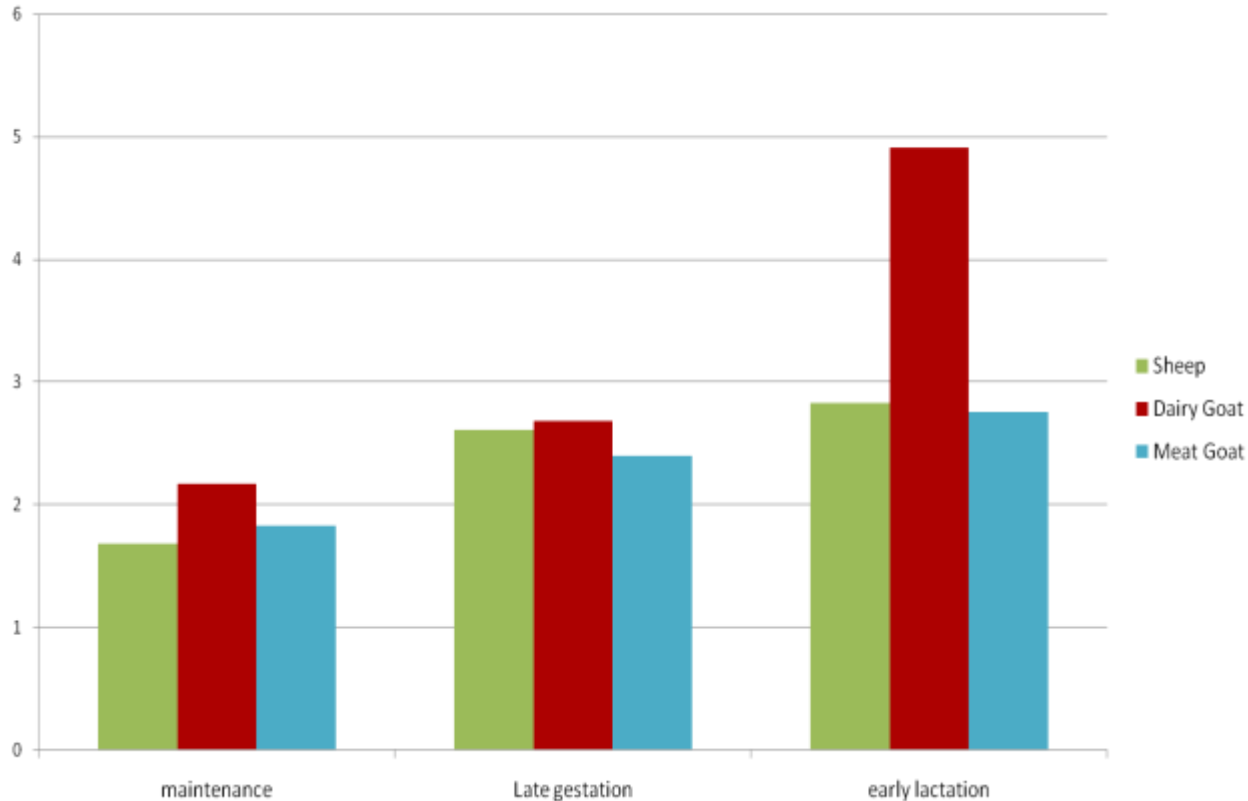
- Strong mothers, babies, colostrum and milk
- Focus on forage
- Energy
- Water and minerals

• INTAKE

- Animal needs increase
- Space is an issue
- Forage quality declines with maturity



Daily Intake, % of body weight



For example:

180-pound ewe at maintenance, 3.24 pounds feed; during gestation, 5 pounds

120-pound dairy goat at maintenance needs 2.4 pounds feed, while during lactation she needs 6 pounds.

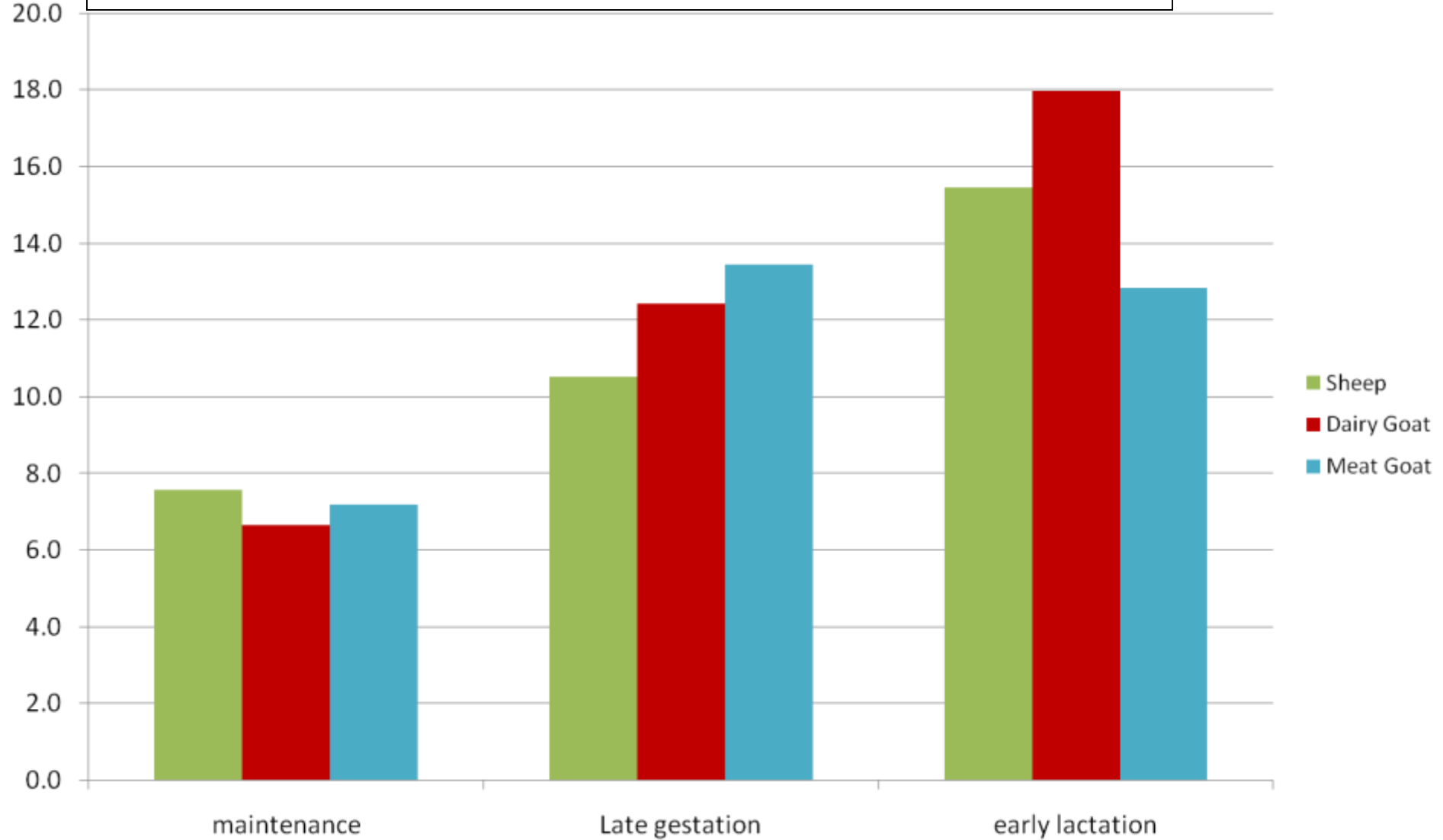
1000 pound cow eating at 2% body weight needs 20 pounds feed,
At 3% she needs 30 pounds feed.

Dramatic increase while space is being taken up by growing babies.

Thanks to Ken Coffey, University of Arkansas



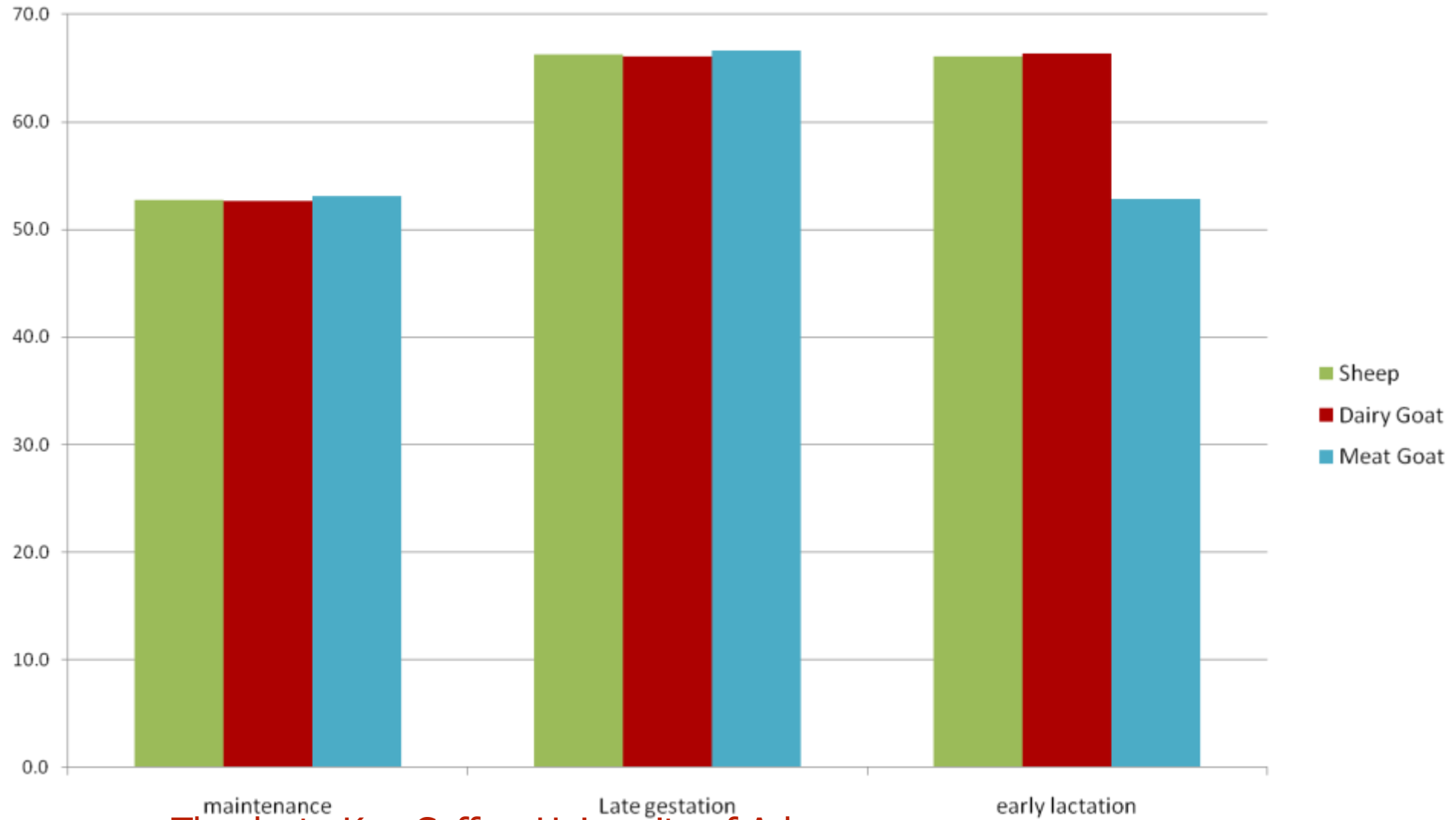
% Crude Protein



Thanks to Ken Coffey, University of Arkansas



% Total digestible nutrients (energy)

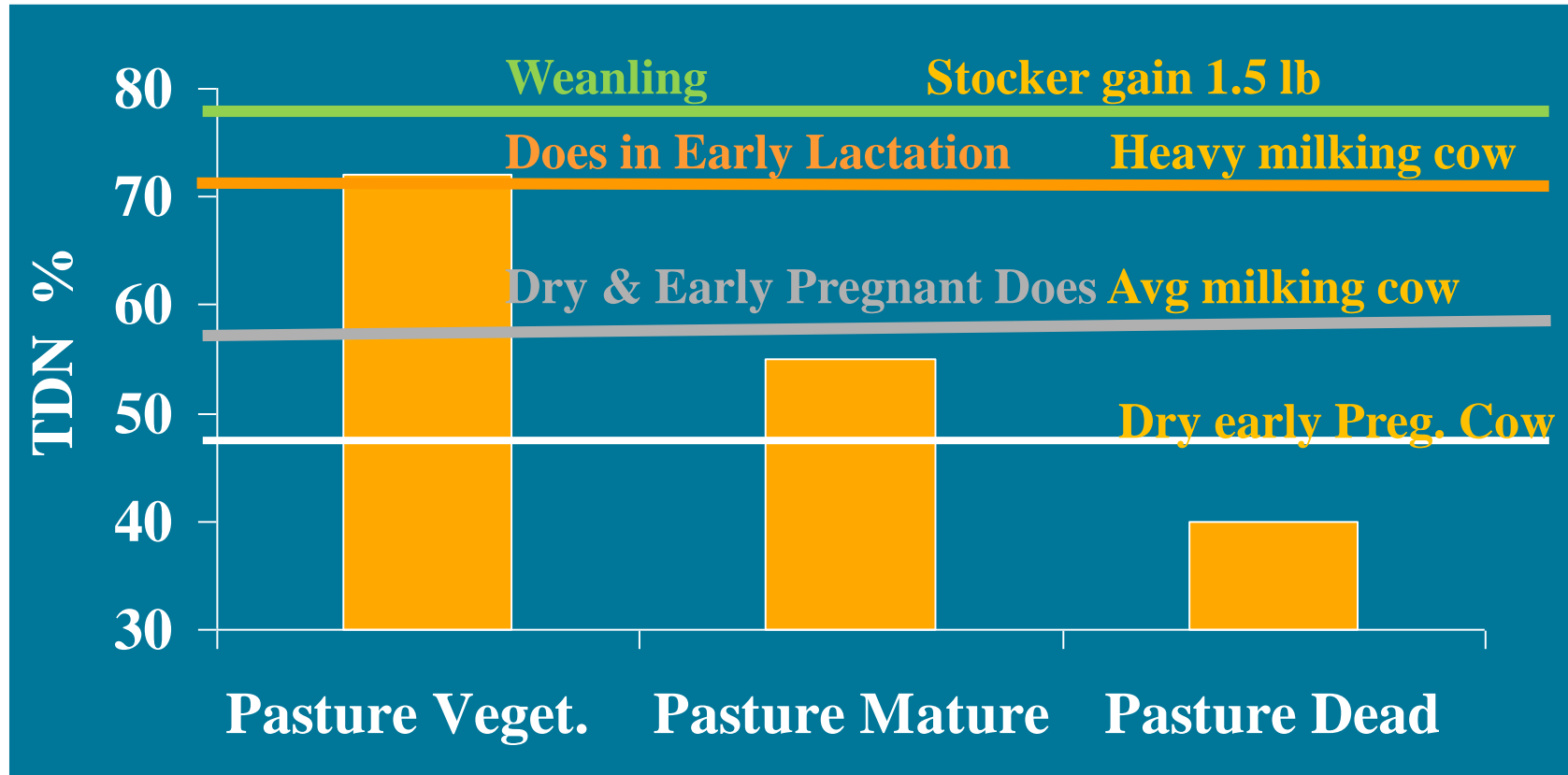


Thanks to Ken Coffey, University of Arkansas



Forage Quality & Requirements

TDN

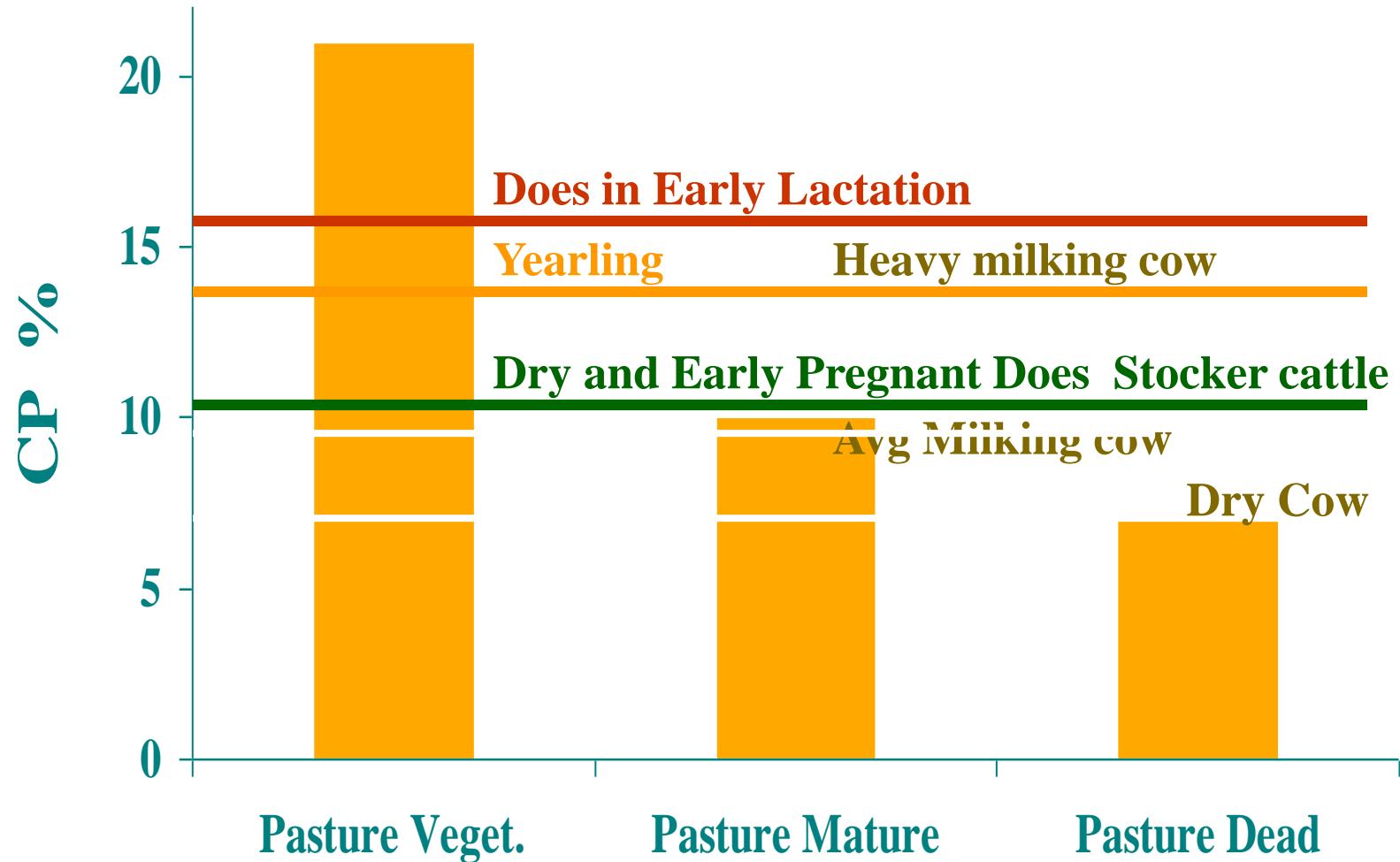


Thanks to Greg Brann, Tennessee Master Meat Goat Producer course



Forage Quality & Requirements

PROTEIN



Thanks to Greg Brann, Tennessee Master Meat Goat Producer course



Body condition



Too fat

At risk for:

- not breeding
- dystocia
- pregnancy toxemia



Too thin

At risk for:

- weak babies
- poor colostrum
- pregnancy toxemia
- other health problems



Just right!

Keep her eating good forages for:

- strong delivery
- strong babies
- good milk
- good health

Great nutrition leads to great outcomes



Quality

Easy for the kids to keep up.
Great quality forage but not
much out there yet.



Quality and quantity

Plenty of great quality
Short graze period



Quality and quantity

This is a great way to feed
hay!

Be sure they can eat all the forage they need



Get help!

- ▶ Cooperative Extension may help with forage analysis and with ration formulation
- ▶ Work with a nutritionist! They can save you lots of money.
- ▶ Maryland Sheep and Goat has a ration balancing program for sheep and goats



Animal Selection

As Thelma and Louise said:
You get what you settle for.



Photo: Linda Poole



Photo: Veseth and Veseth Livestock,
by Jim Steele

New posts Search forums



Linda Poole Moderator

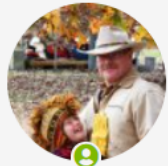
Yesterday at 8:25 PM

Welcome, David Fernandez! We are so pleased that you're part of the Soil for Water community!

And since you invited questions, here's one for you. First, to set the stage: the small ruminant team at NCAT (the National Center for Appropriate Technology) will be doing a webinar next week with the Food Animal Concerns Trust on lambing, kidding and calving on pasture. My part of the talk will focus on selection of breeding stock. I see you have a nice publication on this topic regarding hair sheep.

The question: What would be your top one or two tips on selecting breeding stock for pasture-based livestock systems? With only 8 minutes for this segment, it will be pretty basic, though I plan a deeper dive on the topic in an upcoming podcast.

I'll be happy to give you full credit for your answers during the webinar! Register for the webinar here to see that I deliver on my promise!



David Fernandez New member

18 minutes ago

#3

Linda Poole said:

Welcome, David Fernandez! We are so pleased that you're part of the Soil for Water community!

And since you invited questions, here's one for you. First, to set the stage: the small ruminant team at NCAT (the National Center for Appropriate Technology) will be doing a webinar next week with the Food Animal Concerns Trust on lambing, kidding and calving on pasture. My part of the talk will focus on selection of breeding stock. I see you have a nice publication on this topic regarding hair sheep.

The question: What would be your top one or two tips on selecting breeding stock for pasture-based livestock systems? With only 8 minutes for this segment, it will be pretty basic, though I plan a deeper dive on the topic in an upcoming podcast.

Click to expand...

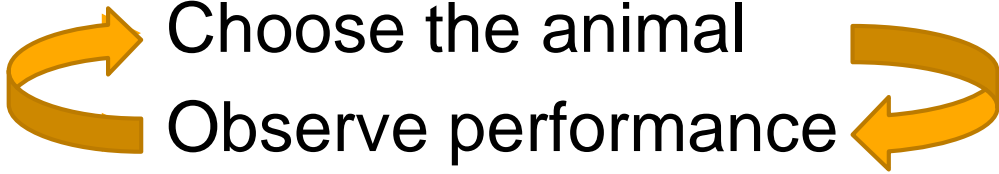
My top concern for any pasture-based system is ease of calving/kidding/lambing (especially that they twin easily for the small ruminants!). When animals are dispersed and unlikely to receive assistance with a difficult birth, they need to be able to calve, lamb or kid easily. My other top pick is that the animals be appropriately sized to the available forage. Larger animals often cannot meet their nutritional needs on pasture alone, or you cannot raise as many pounds per acre as you might wish because of their nutritional needs for maintenance.

Linda Poole



Animal Selection

- ▶ Choose the breed
- ▶ Choose the breeder
- ▶ Choose the animal
- ▶ Observe performance



American Mashona. Photo: Weaver Ranch, New Mexico



Black Angus. Photo: pharocattle.com



Scottish Highlander. Photo: highlandcattlesociety.com

Which breed is best for your context?

- ▶ Climate
- ▶ Your land
- ▶ Shelter, fences
- ▶ Products and markets

- ▶ Purebred or crossbred?
 - Hybrid vigor
- ▶ Closed vs. open herd



Photo: Charles Larry/The Nature Conservancy, at cnn.com

Choosing a breeder

- ▶ Place & practices like yours
- ▶ Experienced
- ▶ Excellent health program
- ▶ Breeding soundness guarantee
- ▶ Mentoring?



Photo: Barthelmess Ranch, by Linda Poole



Photo: Wayne Hutchinson/SWNS
in DailyMail.com



Image: publicauctionyards.com

Choosing good breeding stock

- ▶ Health
 - Parasite resistance
 - B-ovis test rams
- ▶ Soundness
 - Structural
 - Breeding
 - Behavior
- ▶ Fits your context
- ▶ Easy does it
- ▶ No second chances
- ▶ Observe!

Quarantine new stock!



Photo: uklivestock.co.uk



Photo: Sage Hill Show Lambs
at raisingsheep.net



Photo: nadis.org.uk

Preparation

- ▶ Farm Goals
- ▶ Recordkeeping
- ▶ Timing
- ▶ Vaccinations and other health care



And have a plan

- ▶ Contingency plan
- ▶ Supplies on hand



Photo credit: CINDY DEORNELLIS

Safe Environment

- ▶ Adequate space
- ▶ Shelter
- ▶ Clear of hazards
- ▶ Livestock guardian animals
- ▶ Predators



Observation

Before birth:

- ▶ ABCDE: Appetite, Behavior, Coat, Demeanor, Energy
- ▶ Signs of impending birth

During birth:

- ▶ Progression of labor

After birth:

- ▶ Thriving offspring
- ▶ Successful mothering

* Keep records of your observations!



It's time!

- ▶ Dropping
- ▶ Bagging
- ▶ Swelling
- ▶ Behavior
- ▶ Water bag
- ▶ Labor
- ▶ Feet and nose presenting (in the ideal world)

















Meanwhile, in another corner of the barn...



What if it's not normal? Why to intervene:

- ▶ Dystocia
 - ▶ Mis-presentation
 - ▶ Failure to clear the nostrils
 - ▶ Mismothering/grannying
 - ▶ Maternal aggression or indifference
-
- ▶ Write it down! You likely won't remember by next year.



When and how to intervene:

▶ When:

- If active labor is prolonged (Linda C gives it an hour; Linda P has other indicators rather than time.)
- After the cervix is dilated
- If observation indicates a problem

▶ How:

- Be clean
- Be gentle
- Be aware of zoonotic diseases
- Don't intervene unnecessarily



Be sure to keep yourself safe! Calm, friendly animals can behave differently at birthing time.

What do you need?

- ▶ Lube
- ▶ Gloves
- ▶ Clean towels
- ▶ Restraint and/or help
- ▶ Know when and who to ask for help



Photo credit: CINDY DEORNELLIS

What happens after?

Routine management handling:

- ▶ Navel dip
- ▶ Docking
- ▶ Castration
- ▶ Identification marking
- ▶ Vaccinations

Interventions if the baby is:

- ▶ Separated
- ▶ Cold
- ▶ Weak
- ▶ Not getting enough milk
- ▶ Sick



Recognize that intervening can disrupt maternal bonding.

What do you need?

- ▶ A jug
- ▶ A heat source
- ▶ Colostrum
- ▶ Milk or milk replacer
- ▶ Tubing
- ▶ Nipples and bottles



Next year starts now

- ▶ What worked well?
- ▶ What didn't? How could we make it better next year?
- ▶ What was the weakest link?
- ▶ Learning:
 - Mentors!!!
 - NCAT
 - Webinars/classes



How we handle the 5 keys on our farm:

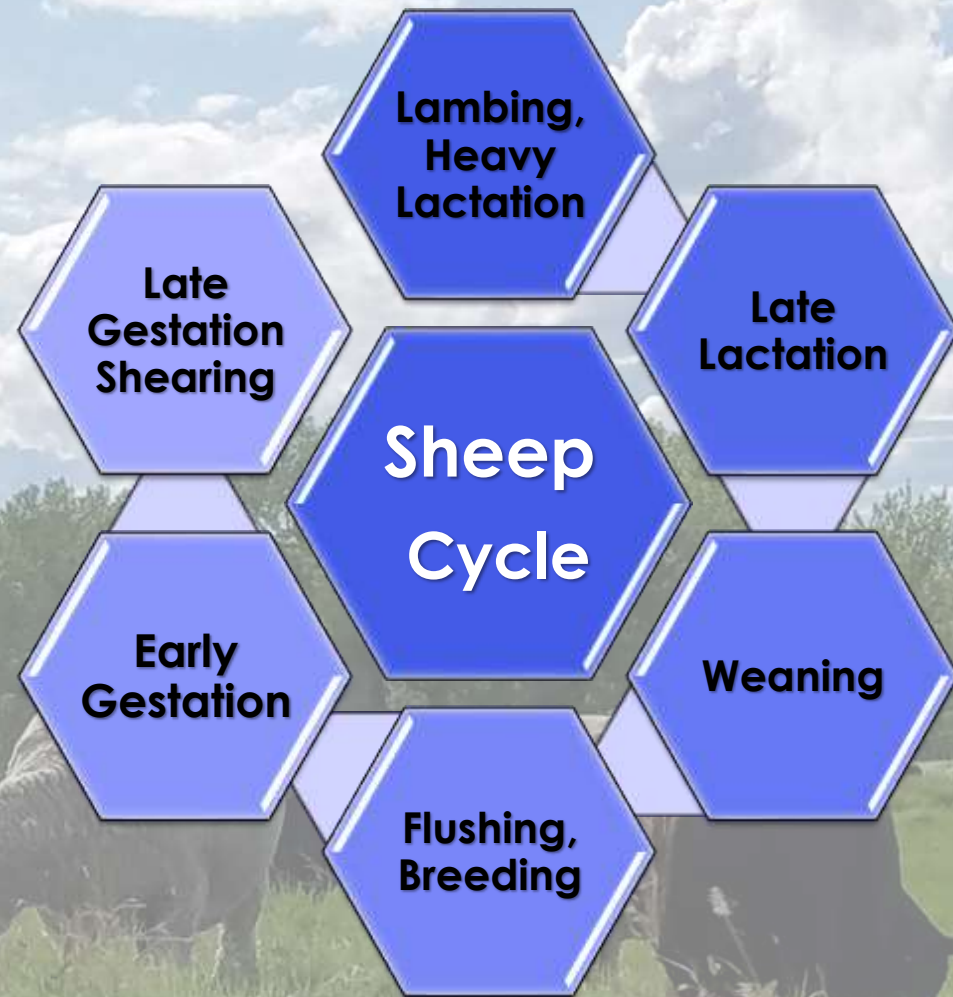
▶ Linda Coffey, AR



How we handle the 5 keys: Linda Poole

- ▶ Nature first
- ▶ Health always
- ▶ Hybrid vigor
- ▶ Be prepared





How we handle the 5 keys on our farm:

- ▶ Tracy Mumma, MT
- ▶ Nutrition
- ▶ Animal Selection
- ▶ Safe Environment
- ▶ Planning and preparation
- ▶ Observation and intervention



How we handle the 5 keys on our farm:



Encouragement

- ▶ The mothers know what to do!!!
- ▶ Know your livestock
- ▶ Most of the time, they don't need us.
- ▶ Questions?



Resources

- ▶ Resource list will be sent tomorrow

- ▶ Linda Coffey, lindac@ncat.org
- ▶ Margo Hale, margoh@ncat.org
- ▶ Tracy Mumma, tracym@ncat.org
- ▶ Linda Poole, lindap@ncat.org

- ▶ ATTRA
 - [ATTRA.NCAT.ORG](https://attra.ncat.org)
 - Livestock and Pasture section <https://attra.ncat.org/topics/livestock-pasture/>
 - 800-346-9140 or chat on our website

Questions?



Thank you!



— ATTRA.NCAT.ORG —

Connect with **FACT**

Food Animal Concerns Trust

Upcoming webinars

- 🐔 **January 19:** Farrowing on Pasture
- 🐔 **January 26:** Grazing for Resilience - Bouncing Forward from Catastrophic Events
- 🐔 **January 31:** Converting Woodland into Silvopasture Part 1
- 🐔 **February 7:** Converting Woodland into Silvopasture Part 2

Grants, Scholarships, Training, Mentorship & More!

- 🐔 **Fund-a-Farmer Grants** – *Apply by January 20, 2022*
- 🐔 **Customized handouts** on the nutritional benefits of food from pastured animals
- 🐔 **Scholarships** – *ongoing*

Sign up for emails @ foodanimalconcernstrust.org/farmer/

Join us on social media

